

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 2/17/76

~~SECRET~~

Transmit the following in _____ CODE _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via CABLE ^{9:45} _{0 48} ROUTINE (NITEL) _____
(Priority)

12:45
13:15

TO: DIRECTOR (109-12-201) NR. ⁰²⁵-17

FROM: LEGAT BUENOS AIRES (109-2)(109-103)(P)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
FOREIGN POLITICAL MATTERS - ARGENTINA; IS - ARGENTINA;
ARGENTINE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES; FPM - ARGENTINA.

ON FEBRUARY 16, 1976, [A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE ABROAD, WHO IS AN OFFICIAL OF THE FEDERAL POLICE OF ARGENTINA (FPA)] ADVISED AS FOLLOWS: ~~(S)~~(U)

DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF FEBRUARY 16, 1976, THE MONTONERO GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION BOMBED A FORD MOTOR COMPANY SHOWROOM IN BUENOS AIRES. THERE WERE NO PERSONAL INJURIES AND MODERATE STRUCTURAL DAMAGE.

CLASSIFIED BY 5931, XGDS-2, INDEFINITE.

ADMINISTRATIVE - [SOURCE IS COMISARIO GENERAL ENRIQUE BESTEIRO, DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL SECURITY, FPA.] ~~(S)~~(U)

COORDINATED LOCALLY.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED DECISIONS FINALIZED
BY DEPARTMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)
DATE: 7-10-96 BY: P71/0747
SAB AC/calf/11-2-86 appeal 90-0371

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 E/W BCE/08
REASON: 1.5
DECLASSIFY ON: X-6
Argentine Project

- 1 - 105-767 (MONTONEROS)
- 1 - 80-205 (BESTEIRO) ~~(S)~~(U)

RWS:jn 214
(4)
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411

5-3-01
CLASSIFIED BY 39063 E/W BCE/08
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/6
Argentine Project
109-2-1533
lux

Approved: lux
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 9:45A M Per lk
2/17/76 U.S. Government Printing Office: 1972 - 455-574

CONTROL: 1095
 18 Feb 76
 1350

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TELEGRAM

INDICATE
 COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

FROM: AmEmbassy BUENOS AIRES CLASSIFICATION: ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

E.O. 11652: GDS
 TAGS: PINT, AR
 SUBJECT: Government Moves to Silence Critics, Worsens Crisis

ACTION: SecState WASHDC IMMEDIATE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ BUENOS AIRES 1095

Ref: Zambito-Bell Telcon February 16

AMB
 POL-3
 POL/R
 ECOM
 USIS
 USDAO
 MILGP-2
 LEGAT
 SC/LAT
 RF
 CHRON

1. Summary. Efforts by Mrs. Peron's administration to silence opposition by closing Congress and silencing its most vocal press critics have only served to sharpen antagonisms and deepen political crisis. End Summary.

2. During course of last week Mrs. Peron and her close advisors were subjected to rising chorus of criticism from congressional critics who charged government had ceased to function. Led by UCR, opposition parties were seeking to place before Congress a motion declaring Mrs. Peron "unable" to discharge office of presidency, a move they claimed would force her from office. UCR Leader Balbin spent entire week meeting with heads of other parties and some dissident Peronists to test viability of scheme. According to UCR sources, Balbin undertook task when advised by three CINCS that their patience

109-2-1534

DRAFTED BY: POL: FJZambito:mg <i>FJZ</i>	DRAFTING DATE: 2/18/76	SEARCHED SERIALIZED INDEXED FILED 121 FEB 19 1976	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: A/POLCOUR:RRGamble AMB:RCHILL A/DCM:WBeal
CLEARANCES: DAO: ColFVazquez <i>FV</i> POL/R: DLSmock <i>DL</i>		LEGAL ATTACHE - BUENOS AIRES <i>lux</i>	

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

with civilian solutions coming to an end. As week ended, prospects for congressional solution to crisis seemed remote despite publicly expressed fears by diverse political leaders that failure to remove Mrs. Peron from office soon would spell end to constitutional government.

3. At that point (February 13) Minister of Interior Ares announced that GOA had decided that constitutional reform was the government's "number one priority." This announcement both surprised and angered not only the opposition but large number of Peronists as well. Most saw move as inept and ineffectual attempt to divert attention from main issues, i.e., the continuance of constitutional government and the lack of effective government response to the economic and political malaise. Ares's statement was accompanied by decree ordering close of La Opinion (see septel) and led to charges government would soon move to close Congress. Ares immediately called a press conference to state that these charges were a "fantasy" produced by government opponents in the grips of "hysteria."

4. On February 16, Ares destroyed what little public credibility he had by transmitting decree to Congress withdrawing all pending business before both Chambers, thus closing Congress until May 1. Predictably, this move only increased calls for Congress to move to oust Mrs. Peron. One congressman told Emboff hours before Ares's announcement "our only

hope to oust President constitutionally is for her to make strategic error, like closing Congress." Whether government move actually results in either impeachment or declaration of her inability to fill office remains to be seen. However, by her own actions she has strengthened hand of her opponents.

5. Since Ares's announcement Monday, opposition has begun new canvass of congressional opinion to see if in light of new circumstances they now have votes to proceed to a successful showdown. Major focus of attention at present is large bloc of labor deputies who up to now have remained loyal to Mrs. Peron. However, following last two weeks of tension and discord between the President and labor, possibility that labor may turn on Mrs. Peron is no longer being discounted. The Lorenzo Miguel-led 62 Organizations has called series of meetings today to "analyze the situation and determine its position." At this point Miguel, who is in Bariloche, has not tipped his hand, but both press reports and Embassy contacts have reported he is discussing possibilities of finding way to support parliamentary move against Mrs. Peron without publicly denouncing her. Some reports indicate labor might attend session to help form quorum but then abstain on substantiated^{VE} vote.

6. At present it is expected that move to auto convoke Congress will come as early as this Friday (February 20).

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And vote on Mrs. Peron expected shortly thereafter. Military is reported to be following issue with close interest and several sources have told Embassy that CINCS are putting out word that this may be last real chance for civilians to put their house in order.

7. Comment: It is still not clear that complex negotiating and bargaining necessary to end crisis via congressional solution can succeed. However, prospects for initiative prospering have definitely been enhanced by latest developments. In any event, present situation has moved country closer to a showdown. From US point of view, it is significant that on what many see as eve of a coup no charges of US involvement have surfaced. Raul Alfonsin, a key UCR leader, and formerly a key critic of US intervention in Latin American affairs, told Ambassador Hill February 17 that US conduct the past two years has been so clearly correct that even malicious attempts to drag the US into the current crisis have not succeeded. Oscar Alende, leader of the leftist Partido Intransigente, made the same point in newspaper interview in Cronista Comercial February 16.

pk
HILL

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Classification

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

F B I

Date: 2/20/76

5-14-01
CLASSIFIED BY 39163 ELS/BCE/PC
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1.6
ARGENTINA Project

Transmit the following in _____ CODE _____
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Via CABLE URGENT (PRIORITY)
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR (109-12-201) NR. 030-20
FROM: LEGAT BUENOS AIRES (109-2)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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FOREIGN POLITICAL MATTERS - ARGENTINA; IS - ARGENTINA.

ON FEBRUARY 19, 1976, A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE ABROAD, WHO IS A SENIOR OFFICER OF THE FEDERAL POLICE OF ARGENTINA (FPA), CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FEDERAL SECURITY (POLICE (INTELLIGENCE) DIVISION), PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (S) (U)

DURING LATE JANUARY 1976, BRIGADIER GENERAL ALBANO EDUARDO HARGUINDEGUY, AN ACTIVE DUTY ARGENTINE ARMY GENERAL, WAS APPOINTED TO THE POSITION OF CHIEF OF THE FEDERAL POLICE OF ARGENTINA (FPA), REPLACING A CAREER FPA OFFICER. AS CHIEF DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY HAS INDICATED TO CONFIDANTS IN THE FPA, THAT HE DESIRES TO FILL CERTAIN KEY POSITIONS CURRENTLY OCCUPIED IN THE FPA BY CAREER FPA OFFICERS WITH ARGENTINE MILITARY PERSONNEL. GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY INDICATED THAT THE REASON FOR HIS DESIRE TO INCORPORATE ARGENTINE MILITARY PERSONNEL IN KEY FPA POSITIONS WAS TO INSURE THAT THE FPA WAS COMPLETELY RESPONSIVE TO THE ARGENTINE MILITARY AND NOT TO THE ARGENTINE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, UNDER WHOSE (S) (U)

1 - 64-2

1 - 80-Marcote
RWS:jn (3)

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 1030 A M Per [Signature]

109-2-1535

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
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(Priority)~~SECRET~~

PAGE TWO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

BUE 109-2)

AUTHORITY THE FPA NORMALLY OPERATES. GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY INDICATED THAT AN ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY OFFICER, SERVING IN THE FPA, WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE ORDERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE RESPECTIVE MILITARY SERVICE, WHEREAS A CAREER FPA OFFICER WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO FOLLOW THE ORDERS OF THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, SHOULD A CONFLICT ARISE BETWEEN THE ORDERS ISSUED BY A MILITARY FPA CHIEF AND THE CIVILIAN MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. ~~(S)~~ (U)

GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE INTENDED TO INSTALL ACTIVE ARGENTINE ARMY COLONELS IN THE POSITIONS OF FPA CHIEF OF THE ESTADO MAYOR (HIGH COMMAND) AND THE DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL SECURITY ~~(POLICE)~~ ^(DIVISION) (INTELLIGENCE). DURING THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 19, 1976, A DELEGATION OF INCUMBENT FPA COMISARIO GENERALES AND COMISARIO MAYORES INFORMED GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY THAT SHOULD HE REPLACE ANY INCUMBENT FPA CAREER OFFICER WITH MILITARY PERSONNEL, EVERY COMISARIO GENERAL AND COMISARIO MAYOR PRESENTLY SERVING IN THE FPA WOULD RESIGN IN PROTEST. SUCH A MASS RESIGNATION WOULD CAUSE HAVOC IN THE COMMAND STRUCTURE ~~(S)~~ (U)

END PAGE TWO

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

F B I

Date:

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Via _____
(Priority)

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PAGE THREE

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BUE 109-2

OF THE FPA AND MAKE IT VIRTUALLY UNMANAGEABLE. FOR THE TIME
BEING GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY HAS BACKED DOWN FROM HIS INTENTION
OF INSTALLING ARMY OFFICERS IN THE TWO AFOREMENTIONED FPA
POSITIONS. ~~(S)~~ (U)

~~CLASSIFIED BY 5931 XGDS-2 INDEFINITE.~~

ADMINISTRATIVE - [SOURCE IS COMISARIO MAYOR CARLOS VICENTE
MARCOTE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF FEDERAL SECURITY,
FPA.] ~~(S)~~ (U)

COORDINATED LOCALLY.

END.

~~SECRET~~

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

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(Priority)

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TO: - DIRECTOR (109-12-201) NR. 633-20
FROM: LEGAT BUENOS AIRES (109-2)

~~SECRET~~

FOREIGN POLITICAL MATTERS - ARGENTINA; IS - ARGENTINA.

ON FEBRUARY 19, 1976, A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE ABROAD, WHO IS A RETIRED ~~ARMY~~ ARGENTINE ARMY COLONEL CURRENTLY HOLDING A KEY POSITION WITH FABRICACIONES MILITARES (ARGENTINE MILITARY ARMAMENT FACTORY), PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: ~~(S)~~ (U)

FABRICACIONES MILITARES HAS JUST COMPLETED A PROJECT ON THE ORDERS OF ARGENTINE ARMY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF RAFAEL VIDELA, WHEREIN FABRICACIONES MILITARES WOULD TAKE OVER CONTROL OF CERTAIN KEY CIVILIAN-RUN FACTORIES IN THE EVENT OF A MILITARY COUP D'ETAT AGAINST THE PERON GOVERNMENT. THE PURPOSE OF FABRICACIONES MILITARES TAKING OVER CONTROL OF THESE KEY CIVILIAN-RUN FACTORIES IS TO PLACE THEM UNDER THE DIRECT COMMAND OF THE MILITARY IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE ~~(S)~~ (U)

END PAGE ONE

1 - 80-~~(DU)~~ (80-216)

RWS RWS:jn (2)

5-14-01
CLASSIFIED BY 39063ELW/BCE/06
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1,6
Argentina (Project)

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109-2-1536

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Approved: *RWS*
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 2:30⁰ M Per *[Signature]*

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Date:

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PAGE TWO

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BUE 109-2

THEIR CONTINUED OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF A MILITARY
COUP D'ETAT. ~~(S)~~ (U)

~~CLASSIFIED BY 5931 XGDS 2 INDEFINITE.~~

ADMINISTRATIVE - SOURCE IS COLONEL JUAN CARLOS DUQUET,
FABRICACIONES MILITARES. ~~(S)~~ (U)

COORDINATED LOCALLY.

END.

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Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____